

Many 15th District residents, businesses and nonprofit organizations have provided significant efforts to aid the victims of Hurricane Katrina. Here is a brief list of national, regional and local organizations that can use your help.

For regular updates on relief efforts and other information on how to help please go to www.fema.gov

For displaced victims in Southeastern Pennsylvania

Call 215-665-2544, which is an agency called Brotherly Love. This organization currently has some 30 agencies on staff to help those in need from the disaster.

Ways to Help Victims of Katrina

Businesses that want to help should go to www.swern.gov and register. The Department of Homeland Security will then match those offers with what is needed on the ground.

Individuals can also call the FEMA hotline at 800-440-6728 to volunteer or donate.

Always be mindful that in times of crisis, there are those who take advantage of Americans' generosity. Be wary of solicitations for money unless you are absolutely sure it is a reputable agency.

What is Congress doing?

Committee on Appropriations

- ✓ Passed two emergency relief supplemental packages totaling \$62 billion.
- H.R. 3645 (*P.L. 109-61*), Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act to Meet Immediate Needs Arising From the Consequences of Hurricane Katrina.
 - *Provides \$10.5 billion for immediate needs in response to Hurricane Katrina and the flooding.*
- H.R. 3673 (*P.L. 109-62*), Second Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act to Meet Immediate Needs Arising From the Consequences of Hurricane Katrina.
 - *Provides \$50 billion for the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Disaster Relief Fund (DRF), \$1.4 billion for the Department of Defense, and \$400 million for the Army Corps of Engineers to repair damaged infrastructure. Additionally, Congress included reporting and*

accountability requirements to ensure spending of taxpayer dollars are spent wisely towards disaster relief.

Committee on Ways and Means

- H.R. 3672 – TANF Emergency Response and Recovery Act of 2005.
 - *Provides all states immediate access to their next quarter's Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant and immediately makes available \$4.2 billion in flexible funds to all states for use in supporting those families with children affected by Hurricane Katrina.*
 - *Agreed to in the House by voice vote on September 8, 2005.*

Committee on Financial Services

- H.R. 3669 – Increasing the Borrowing Authority of the Federal Emergency Management Agency For Carrying Out The National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
 - *Increases FEMA's borrowing authority for the National Flood Insurance Program by \$2 billion to ensure prompt response to claim holders.*
 - *Agreed to in the House by a vote of 416-0 on September 8, 2005. Agreed to in the Senate by unanimous consent on September 12, 2005.*

Committee on Education and the Workforce

- H.R. 3169 – Pell Grant Hurricane Disaster Relief Act
 - *Permits the Secretary of Education to provide a waiver for students required to repay Pell Grants because they were forced to withdraw from classes due to a natural disaster as declared by the President.*
 - *Agreed to in the House by a vote of 412-0 on September 7, 2005.*
- H.R. 3668 – Student Grant Hurricane and Disaster Relief Act
 - *Permits the Secretary of Education to provide a waiver for students required to repay grant aid (TRIO, GEAR UP, LEAP, SEOG) because they were forced to withdraw from classes due to a natural disaster as declared by the President.*
 - *Agreed to in the House by a vote of 414-0 on September 8, 2005.*

Committee on the Judiciary

- H.R. 3650 (P.L. 109-63), Federal Judiciary Emergency Special Sessions Act
 - *Authorizes federal courts to conduct special sessions outside their respective geographic boundaries if their normal operations are interrupted because of emergency conditions.*

Committee on Government Reform

- ✓ The Committee is scheduled to hold a hearing at 10 a.m. September 15th looking at the issue of emergency preparedness and emergency planning.
 - *The Committee will examine emergency plans in other major cities, cities that potentially face similar catastrophic events, natural or manmade. The hearing will be conducted in a way that will not interfere with any ongoing Katrina response efforts.*

Committee on Energy and Commerce

- ✓ On September 7th the full committee on Energy and Commerce held a hearing on recovering from Katrina. Witnesses included Governor Haley Barbour and representatives from the Department of Energy, Homeland Security, the National Resources Defense Council, and the oil, gas and retail industries.

Committee on Small Business

- ✓ The Committee continues to work with the Senate Small Business and Entrepreneurship Committee to explore legislation to ensure small businesses devastated by Hurricane Katrina are able to easily access to the SBA's disaster loan programs as well as federal contracts for rebuilding.

Committee on Science

- ✓ The Committee has scheduled a hearing on Wednesday, September 14th with General David Johnson, Director of the National Weather Service, to learn more about Hurricane Katrina predictions and forecasts and what we should expect for the remainder of this hurricane season.

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